

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 04110 251742Z

43

ACTION EUR-25

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TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: PCI LEADER EMPHASIZES PARTY SHIFT TO HARD OPPOSITION

1. IN MARCH 22 SPEECH EXPLAINING COMMUNIST NEGATIVE VOTE ON PROGRAM OF NEW RUMOR GOVERNMENT, PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER SHARPLY CRITICIZED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY LEADERSHIP, BLAMING DC FOR WHAT HE CHARACTERIZED AS NEGATIVE CHANGE IN ENTIRE POLITICAL SITUATION SINCE LAST SUMMER. BERLINGUER SPECIFICALLY ATTACKED WHAT HE CLAIMED WERE DC LEADERSHIP DECISIONS TO PROCEED WITH THE DIVORCE REFERENDUM, TO ATTEMPT BY ALL MEANS TO WIN IT, INCLUDING USE OF CLERICAL INTERVENTION AND TO LAUNCH A "VULGAR ANTI-COMMUNIST CRUSADE." THESE DECISIONS, SAID BERLINGUER, COMBINED WITH THE ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE WORKING CLASSES PAY THE COSTS OF THE GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY PROGRAM, HAVE LED TO A DETERIORATION IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SITUATION AND FOR THIS REASON, THE PCI IS ADOPTING A "HARDER" LINE OF OPPOSITION VS THE GOVERNMENT AND THE DC. HOWEVER, BERLINGUER STATED THAT NEW "CLEARER" AND "MORE COMPACT" OPPOSITION WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DEVELOP INTO "MAXIMALIST" APPROACH.

2. WITH REFERENCE TO "HISTORIC OMPROMISE" OFFER, BERLINGUER STATED THAT PROGRESS TOWARDS THIS CONTINUED PCI GOAL WILL PERFORCE MOVE FORWARD IN "ZIG-ZAG" FASHION AND THAT NEW, HARDER OPPOSITION DOES NOT MEAN PARTY HAS ABANDONED HOPE OF REACHING "DEMOCRATIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 ROME 04110 251742Z

TURN BASED ON CONVERGENCE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG POPULAR FORCES."

3. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL HOW NEW PCI OPPOSITION POLICY WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO PRACTICE. ATTITUDE IN PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONS WILL BE INDICATIVE AS WILL TACTICS ON LABOR FRONT. AS DC SPOKESMEN POINT OUT, PCI IS UNDER PRESSURE TO PREVENT DEFECTIONS FROM ITS OWN RANKS ON DIVORCE REFERENDUM AND IS THEREFORE FORCED TO LINK DIVORCE WITH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES ON WHICH IT CAN COUNT ON SUPPORT OF PARTY FAITHFUL. VOLPE

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